

Advocates

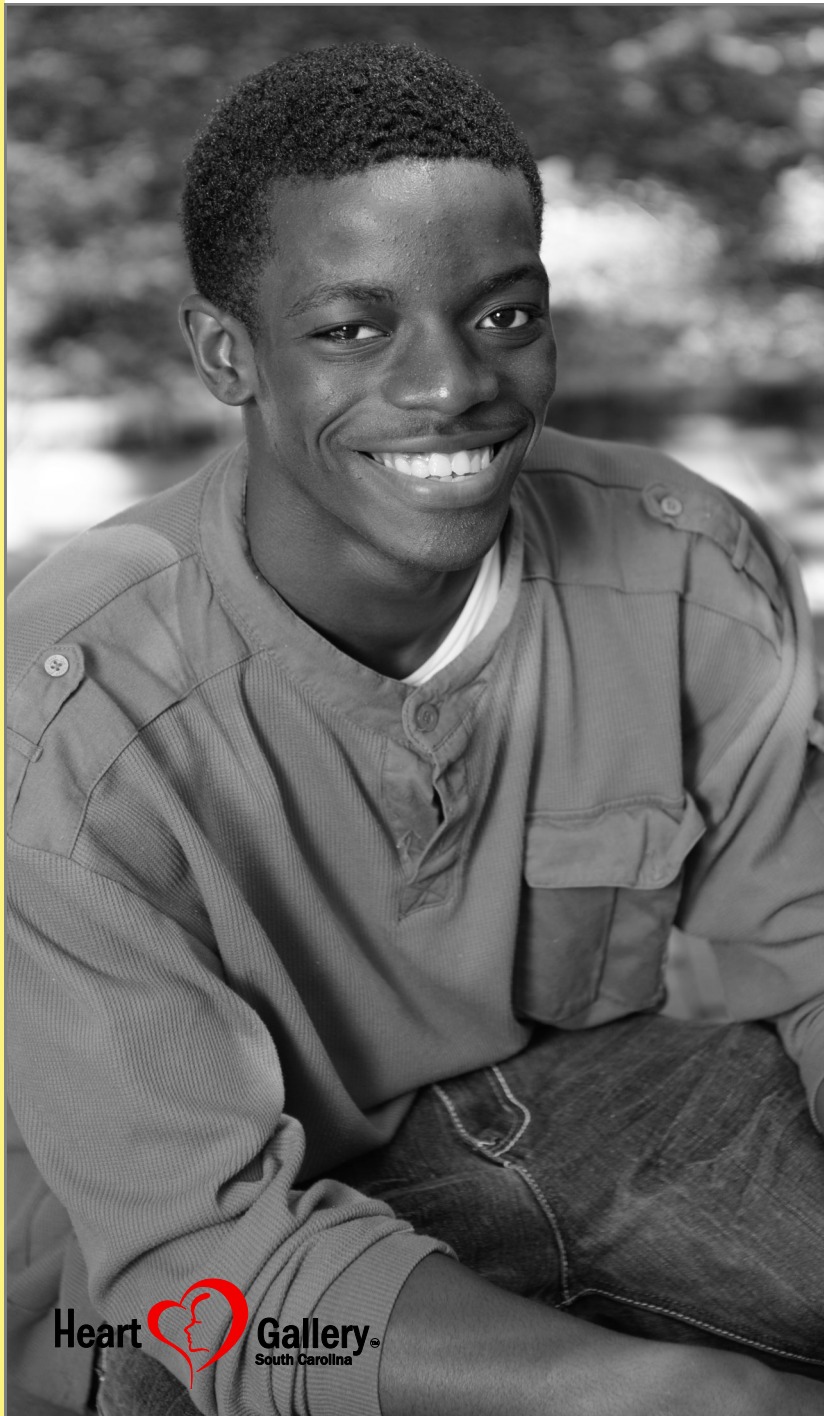


Citizens Advocating Safety & Permanence

Foster Care Review Board - South Carolina Heart Gallery Newsletter

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Tellegirino

Tellegirino describes himself as fun, sensitive and hardworking. He enjoys sports, especially basketball, football and wrestling. Tellegirino would like to become an underwater welder because he would get to travel. He enjoys Science and Biology at school and names cheeseburgers as his favorite food. Tellegirino is multi-talented and enjoys writing music and singing. Tellegirino would like to join a family that includes a mom and dad, but no other children.

Contact info@scheartgallery.org for more information about adoption.
Photography by Mike Baker

New Review Board Members



Standing: Ashley Wright (7A), Ann Maletic (5B), Bernard Harrison (1A), Wilma Shealy (13E), Cynthia Hill (2A)

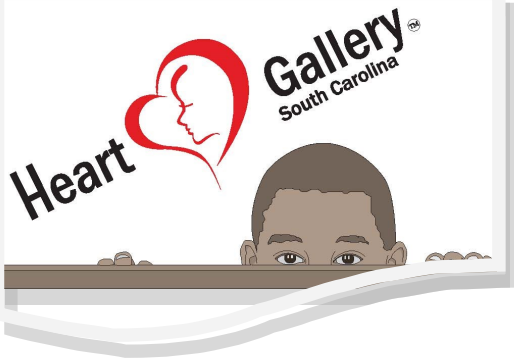
Seated: Ann Elizabeth Nichols (10C), Michele Ramsel (FCRB Staff Attorney), Dietrich Shuler (1A)



Colleen Alton (15C), Linda Leibert (15A), William May (7A), Angel Sbardella (Coordinator, FCRB), Marita Daniels (16B) and Nicole Abee (16A)

WELCOME!

South Carolina Heart Gallery



The SC Heart Gallery continues to see great results from our community photo displays, website, and social media features, as well as from the statewide media campaign produced and marketed through our SC Heart Gallery Foundation. During the contract year October, 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013, a record 217 children attended photo shoots and loved the individual attention from volunteer photographers and local Review Board Members! The resulting photos were featured in 286 community exhibits, informational posters and social media outlets, and even in some high school football programs. 91,154 individuals visited our website, generating 1,075 child specific inquiries! 73 new

families initiated the foster care adoption process through the Heart Gallery. Our Recruitment Specialists completed adoptive home studies for 24 families, some of whom have already been matched with waiting children!

We look forward to the coming year and to sharing more good news with all of you. If you have not already done so, please visit www.scheartgallery.org to view our beautiful waiting children – and ask

your friends and neighbors to do so as well. We invite you to follow us on Facebook or Twitter and share our status updates with your contacts. Working together, we can spread the word that too many children are in danger of aging out of the foster care system without a

place to call home - - and best of all, we can help them find their forever families!

Millie Qualls

Program Coordinator,
South Carolina Heart Gallery

"Over the past year the South Carolina Heart Gallery has worked closely with the South Carolina Department of Social Services Adoptions Division to assist many families in working their way through the approval process. We look forward to 2014 and helping even more families who wish to provide a loving home to a child in foster care."

*Amanda Blackmon
Heart Gallery Recruitment Specialist*





Review Board Roundup

Pickens County 13E

Julie Valentine Center

The Center's inspiration came after an infant was found abandoned in a wooded area in Greenville on a February day in 1990. Unable to identify the child or her family, law enforcement officials named her Julie Valentine. Her legacy became a symbol of hope for those who have survived abuse. On November 20, 2013, Foster Care Review Board 13E visited the Julie Valentine Center. Shauna Galloway-Williams escorted Melissa Robinson and Wilma Shealy and shared her organization's mission.

The Julie Valentine Center provides services in Greenville and Pickens Counties to reduce the trauma of abuse and re-establish safety for victims and their families. They offer forensic medical examinations and interviews essential for investigation, trauma-based therapy, support and education sessions for child and adult survivors of childhood sexual

abuse, and a rape crisis hotline. Community education to stop child abuse and sexual assault is provided by outreach programs, support groups and parent education.

Artwork by children who visited the Center is on display. "Children who participate in treatment focusing on overcoming child sexual abuse have the opportunity to leave their handprint on the canvas. It offers children the chance to show others that healing is a process."

Foster Care Review Board 13E was excited to have the opportunity to tour the Julie Valentine Center and learn about services that engage survivors in healing through compassionate, comprehensive treatment.



Hero Canvas of child abuse survivors



FCRB 13E Board Member Melissa Robinson, Executive Director Shauna Galloway-Williams and FCRB 13E Board Member Wilma Shealy.

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Charleston County 9D

Review Board 9D made sure that they were represented at the quarterly partner's meetings to address issues that hinder permanence for foster children. They volunteered at the Heart Gallery photo shoot in April and attended the Charleston Huddle at SCDSS in July. The Review Board Members met the week prior to reviews to discuss the upcoming reviews, and discuss issues to be addressed at reviews.

Submitted by Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

Charleston County 9C

Review Board 9C purchased new toys and books for the visitation rooms at Charleston County DSS for children of all ages. Board Members volunteered at the Heart Gallery photo shoot in April and provided lunch for all participants. They prepared meals for 30 foster parents and children at a HALOS event. All clothing donated at a Block Party in October 2013 was given to DSS.

Submitted by Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

Horry County 15B & 15C

Boards 15B & 15C Horry County Community Project - On June 8, 2013, 15B and 15C sponsored Open House for Fostering Hope, a local resource for foster children and foster parents that cover many needs with a donation of \$175.

Submitted by Doretta Crosson-Irby, Review Board Coordinator



Al Stein (Chair of Board for Fostering Hope), Kathy Hamilton (15C), & Dr. Ronald Jarmuth (15B)



Mary Beth Halvorson (15B), Tabby Shelton (CEO/Founder of Fostering Hope) & Kathy Hamilton (15C)

Greenville County 13B, 13C & 13D

The Review Board Members advocated for children and generously contributed time and resources. They attended Partners Meetings, Permanency Roundtables, Legislative Delegation meetings, trainings and Family Court hearings.

Review Board 13B, along with Board Member, Brenda Lipe, and her Sunday School Class at First Baptist Simpsonville, redecorated five visitation rooms at the Greenville County Department of Social Services. Family visitation is an important aspect of family reunification. The Review Board wanted to ensure that the rooms offer a home-like atmosphere for family visits. Review Board 13C donated snacks for the "Snack Cart."

In March, the Annual Pancake Breakfast of the Greenville Rotary Club East was held at City Range Steakhouse and Grill. Vernon McCurry, a member of the Rotary Club, enlisted his Review Board to sell tickets. The Breakfast produced over \$6000 to support Shoe Night at Shoe Carnival. In August, 85 children picked new shoes for the school year.

In April, Gene Bishop, Suzanne Gebhart, Jack McCall, and Vernon McCurry, participated in "Working Together to Achieve Positive Outcomes for Children" with DSS and the Guardian Ad Litem Program. Mr. McCall and Mr. McCurry gave presentations about Foster Care Review Board.

Twenty children were photographed for the SC Heart

Gallery at the Greenville Zoo in April. Dot Bailey, Suzanne Gebhart, Gene Bishop, and Jack McCall volunteered. Review Boards 13B and 13C donated refreshments.

During National Foster Care Month in May, the Review Boards sponsored a "Partner Appreciation Lunch" for Greenville DSS Foster Care and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services. They provided a salad bar, pizzas, drinks, Dot Bailey's famous cookies, and Certificates of Appreciation to each staff member.

In August, Review Board Members volunteered at



Gene Bishop (13C) and Heart Gallery child Dequarius at the Greenville Zoo photo shoot.

Camp Opportunity, an organization that offers a summer camp to children who experienced foster care, and registered children for Camp Tekoa. This was rewarding and gave them the opportunity to interact with children reviewed by their Boards.

The Greenville County Family Court held "Adoption Day" in December. Fourteen children officially became

members of their "Forever Families" in time for Christmas. Two children were in the Review Board's Target Advocacy Goal group of older children in need of adoptive homes. It was a momentous day for both children. One child was in foster care for 4946 days, and the other for 3461 days. This joyous occasion proves that teen adoptions are possible and to never give up striving to find a "Forever Home." Rhonda Littleton, 13C Chairperson, coordinated with the Family Court to host a reception. Jane Daniel (13C) obtained food donations. Jack McCall (13B), Gene Bishop (13C), and Jayne Crisp (13D) joined the celebration.

The Review Boards provided resources to assist individual children who were reviewed by their Boards:

A young boy got in trouble for taking books home from school to read without permission. Led by Thomas Angermeier, 13B donated books and committed to continue book donations.

13B sponsored a child with a disability and contributed to purchase of an iPad to enhance language development, and contributed \$310 for Camp Spearhead, so the child could enjoy a week at camp. Gene Bishop (13C) provided a referral to his church, Brushy Creek Baptist, for sign language classes. Jack McCall (13B), Gene Bishop, Suzanne Gebhart, and Rhonda Littleton (13C) purchased sign language books.

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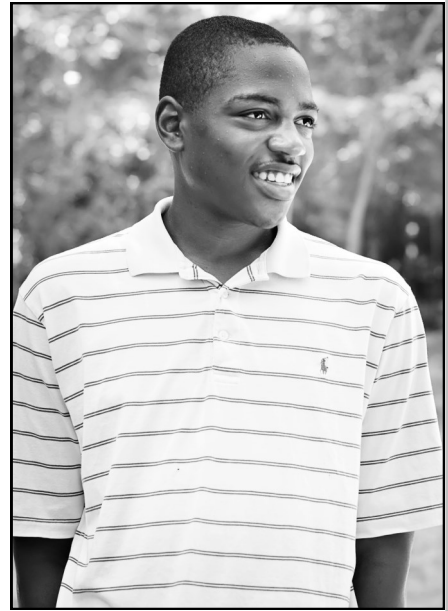
13B, 13C & 13D continued

DSS approached the Board regarding a child who needed orthodontic services, not covered by Medicaid. Jayne Crisp (13D) found a provider to provide the services. Because of Mrs. Crisp's efforts, the child has braces and receives orthodontic care.

13C championed Jayvonte, a young man who fought childhood cancer that went into remission, then re-emerged. He remained humble and had two wishes. One wish was for people to donate to camps that serve children with cancer. He felt the camps provided him with comfort and wanted others to have that experience. His other wish was to meet New York Giants Quarterback, Eli Manning. This may have seemed like an impossible dream. But not to Jane Daniel (13C), who worked

her magic and made contacts. Mr. Manning phoned the young man, who was on "cloud nine" and so appreciative. Several weeks later, this Jayvonte passed away to the sorrow of the Review Board and his dedicated child welfare professionals.

Rhonda Littleton, 13C Chairperson, went above the call of duty to fulfill the Christmas wish of a talented child who secretly desired a French Horn, but was afraid to request it because he didn't think that it was possible. The child rented an instrument from school, but wanted his own because he plans to continue musical studies. With short notice, Ms. Littleton found a French Horn in the nick of time to make his wish come true, with the support of First Baptist Simpsonville.



*Jayvonte's portrait from a 2011 Heart Gallery photo shoot
Photography by Janet Powell*

Submitted by T. Dawn Mike,
Review Board Coordinator

Beaufort & Jasper Counties 14B

Review Board 14B collected over 100 Christmas toys for the children they serve. Linda Cecil shared that they placed boxes around the community, and neighbors showed an amazing outpouring of support. The Toy Closet was stocked with donated items.



FCRB 14B Members Linda Cecil, Barbara Solley, Doris Williams, Verdel Hilton (Beaufort County DSS), Ollie May Farrel, and Rosa Doe (Beaufort County DSS). Not pictured is Joan Stevenson, with Beaufort County DSS, who assisted in creating the Toy Closet.

Submitted by Stephen Clyburn,
Program Supervisor

Marlboro & Dillon Counties 4A

Foster Care Review Board 4A helped support the Pack-a-Sack Program for the South Carolina Foster Parent Association. The Pack-a-Sack supports youth in foster care who are attending college by providing school items in backpacks to supplement their transition from high school to college. Stephen Laird reached out to his Lions' Club to sponsor this project. Carolyn Lide, Stephen Laird, Richard Dixon, Carolyn Wallace and Carole Clardy contributed over \$250 in August 2013.

Pictured: FCRB 4A Chair Carolyn Lide and 4A Member Stephen Laird

Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator



Spartanburg 7A

The Spartanburg County Foster Care Review Boards provided 200 children in care with school supplies, by supplying another 100 school packets for the school closet at DSS, to be used by children who will enter care during the school year.

The Review Boards used community contributions to sponsor four pages in high school football programs to highlight teenagers who are legally free and want a forever family to adopt them. Children from the upstate will be featured in programs in the lower state and vice versa.

A long range project is to get foster children to three sporting events at area colleges. The first event was a soccer game at SMC in October of 2013.

Submitted by 7A Board Member June Bond

Aiken & Bamberg Counties 2B



Review Board 2B worked with Aiken County Department of Social Services and Intensive Foster Care and Clinical Services to host Christmas parties for children in foster care. They worked within their community, donated gift cards and treats, and enjoyed attending the parties.

Submitted by Nina Spinelli,
Review Board Coordinator

*Pictured: Front— FCRB 2B Members Rhonda Bamberg & Cathy Griffin.
Back—Aiken County DSS Supervisor Stacey Toney, Aiken County DSS Director Christine Wright, FCRB 2B Chair Phyllis Yearce & FCRB Coordinator Nina Spinelli.*

Clarendon & Williamsburg Counties 3A

Jane Benton, Carolyn Parker, Raleigh King, Vicki Ouzts, and Eleese Fulton worked hard in 2013 to help the children they serve. In February, Carolyn Parker and Raleigh King volunteered at the Heart Gallery Photo Shoot at the Claussen House in Florence. They enjoyed the opportunity to greet the children and assist photographers in capturing the perfect photos.

In May, they hosted a Foster Parent Appreciation Picnic and invited foster parents and children, to enjoy grilled hamburgers, hotdogs and snacks. They met with a Family Court Judge to discuss how to expedite permanency for children.

Jane Benton and Vicki Ouzts toured The CARE House and enjoyed learning about their services for children. The Board

Submitted by Nina Spinelli,
Review Board Coordinator

handed out backpacks for the Back-to-School Supply Drive at the Council of Aging filled with school supplies to over 100 children! They collaborated with partnering agencies by attending Annual Professional Day in July and partners meetings.



Raleigh King and Carolyn Parker had their own picture snapped at the February 2013 Heart Gallery Photo Shoot in Florence.

Allendale, Colleton & Hampton Counties 14A

The Review Board presented tokens of appreciation to the case managers and supervisors in July 2013. Bracelets were presented to Katherine Rivers, Charlotte Green, Sandy Polk, and Germaine Fyall-Dawson to recognize their work for children. Kelly Ramsey assisted the United Way in collecting Christmas presents for children in foster care for the second year.



*Review Board Members
Daisy Lawton, Winn
Gardner, Kelly Ramsey,
Katherine Rivers (DSS) and
Joan Youmans*



*Review Board Members Winn
Gardner, Daisy Lawton, Joan
Youmans, Charlotte Green
(IFCCS Beaufort) and Kelly
Ramsey*



*Review Board Members Winn
Gardner, Daisy Lawton, Joan
Youmans, Germaine D. Fyall-Dawson
(GHSE), Sandy Polk (Colleton DSS)
and Kelly Ramsey*

Submitted by Doretta Crosson-Irby , Review Board Coordinator

Oconee County 10A

Donna Lee, Cortni Nations, George Sloan, and Barbara Waters graciously gave their time and effort to advocate for children in foster care from Oconee County. They participated in partners meetings, court hearings, and provided resources to assist families working toward reunification with their children. They actively collaborated with community partners to support and show appreciation for their hard work.

Review Board 10A participated in the “FCRB / Permanency Roundtable” Pilot Program to assess the feasibility of combining the Foster Care Review and Permanency Roundtable processes. Six families were reviewed in the pilot program. Three months after the initial review, another review was held to examine case progress.

The 2013 “Target Advocacy Goal” (TAG) of the Foster Care Review Boards required reviews every three months of children 13 and older who were free for adoption. Oconee County had 18 TAG children. To ensure that we were advocating effectively, three days were designated as “TAG DAY”-- April 17, July 22 and October 16. All TAG Children were reviewed on those days with their siblings, for a total of 46 TAG reviews. Participation in both projects resulted in long meeting days, and the Review Board enthusiastically participated to advocate for permanency for children.

Review Board 10A donated \$50 to the Heart Gallery Foundation for refreshments for the Heart Gallery’s Photo Shoot at the Greenville Zoo. The Review Board was delighted that seven more children who they review enjoyed the event.

During “National Foster Care Month” in May, the Review Board 10A

hosted a “Partner Appreciation Party” for the Oconee County Department of Social Services and Guardian ad Litem Program. To say thank you for their work, a pizza lunch was provided to the staff and volunteer guardians. The staff of Anderson Intensive Foster Care & Clinical Services could not attend, and were treated to Subway Gift Cards as a way of saying lunch on us for their work. Individual certificates of appreciation were presented to Oconee DSS and Intensive Foster Care staff, and to the Oconee County Guardian ad Litem staff and volunteers. Review Board Members sent a card to each TAG child from Oconee encouraging them to stay motivated!

Review Board 10A strives to abide by the Mission and Vision of the Foster Care Review Board. Their tireless efforts can be summed up in three words: collaboration, inspiration, and dedication. Their work and support are appreciated by all whom they serve.



*Cara & Cora H. at the Region I
Greenville Zoo Heart Gallery shoot.
Photography by Patrick Cox*

Submitted by T. Dawn Mike,
Review Board Coordinator

Clarendon & Williamsburg/Dillon & Marlboro Counties 3A & 4A



Stephen Laird, Vicki Ouzts, and Jane Benton toured The CARE House of the Pee Dee on August 8, 2013. Melissa Odom gave a tour of the facility that has provided a multi-disciplinary team response to child abuse since 2005. The CARE House conducts forensic interviews in a child-friendly setting for suspected abuse utilizing a standardized method of information collection to avoid coaching the child. Forensic interviews are completed at the request of the Department of Social Services or law enforcement. The referring investigative agencies are provided the information to ensure the child's well-being. CARE House staff provides expert testimony at court and counseling services to children.

Following a background assessment, the interviewer conducts interviews in a sound-proofed room equipped with an in-house camera system that records the interview and can be provided for law enforcement. The agency contacts the child and family at intervals after the assessment to ensure that the family and child have access to resources. The CARE House services 400 children annually.



Submitted by Nina Spinelli, Review Board Coordinator

Employee Spotlight



Jennifer Anstead

Review Board Coordinator

Jennifer is the Coordinator for Boards 9B & 9E (Berkeley), 11A & 11B (Edgefield, Lexington, McCormick & Saluda) and 12B (Marion). She was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri, and spent a year and a half in San Diego before moving to South Carolina in September of 2012. She recently got engaged and has a pug/poodle mix named Pugsley.



Greenville & Oconee County Boards

Recognizing National Adoption Month – Greenville and Oconee FCRB

“Advocating Permanent Families for Children” is the mission of the Foster Care Review Board. By recognizing November as National Adoption Month, the Greenville and Oconee Review Boards actively supported this vision. The four Review Boards merged to bring awareness to Foster Care Adoption and to show appreciation to those who work to find “Forever Families”. On November 16, 2013, Region I Adoption Services held an open house for prospective adoptive parents. The Review Boards donated \$200 to sponsor lunch.

Review Board Members presented the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption video, “A Place to Call Home,” featuring the journeys of four families adopting children from foster care, to their churches, friends, and community groups. They circulated posters from the SC Heart Gallery and the Dave Thomas Foundation to publicize adoption for older children, the importance of permanence, and to promote that every child is adoptable.

Sharon Cook, Administrator of Region I Adoption Services, leads her staff to be the driving force to finalize permanence for children in the Upstate. The Adoptions Specialists, Family Workers, Concurrent Planners, and Management work with community partners to ensure that everything possible is done to expedite permanence. To recognize their excellent work, the Review Boards presented certificates of appreciation with a gift basket of treats.



Submitted by T. Dawn Mike Review Board Coordinator

Union & York Counties 16A & 16B

The Review Boards continued donations to their account to fund purchases for the special events for foster children. They attended quarterly partner’s meetings and have a great working relationship with DSS.

Submitted by Michelle White, Review Board Coordinator

Important Dates

Heart Gallery Region I Shoot (Spartanburg)	February 6	State Board of Directors Meeting	May 2
President's Day (State Holiday)	February 17	Confederate Memorial Day (State Holiday)	May 9
Heart Gallery Region IV Shoot (Florence)	March 6	Heart Gallery Region II Shoot (Columbia)	May 12
Heart Gallery Region III Shoot (Charleston)	April 15	Memorial Day (State Holiday)	May 26
Orientation for New Review Board Members	April 28	Independence Day (State Holiday)	July 4

2014

Vision Statement

South Carolina will make child well-being a top priority by assuring safe, permanent families for all children in foster care.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Foster Care Review Board is to provide external accountability for the foster care system and to advocate on behalf of children in foster care.

Advocates is published semi-annually by the Foster Care Review Board. The deadline for submission for articles for the next issue of *Advocates* (Summer 2014) is

June 1, 2014.

Anyone wishing to submit an article should contact *Advocates* editor Selina Joyner at:

SJoyner@oepp.sc.gov

The publisher reserves the right to make the final determination as to the content of each issue. Articles submitted are subject to editing and are not guaranteed inclusion.

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